

15th July, 1955.

Dear Mr. Thom,

Thank you for your letter of July 11th. I feel very sure, as you do, that the method you outline must have been used quite frequently, and for the most part with no consciousness of innovation merely as a sensible approximation which delivers the goods. I have, however, no particular reference that would help you.

The example seems to illustrate very well the change in tone of statistical discussion due to the teaching of mathematical statistics in mathematical departments, often remote from contact with the Natural Sciences, and in which, therefore, many of the discussers have no real basis for common sense judgement at all, but seem to hope that they can fulfil the same ends by elaborate formalistic studies, such as those in Wald's "Decision functions".

I shall hope to clear up some of the purely logical confusion arising from this source, in a forthcoming book on "Statistical methods and scientific inference". This is, however, only one small step towards curing the general disease.

Sincerely yours,